

The Bulb Garden

Volume 1 Issue 2
Summer 2002

Welcome to New Members.....	1
Crocus in the Garden By David Stephens.....	1
Garden Notes	3
Daffodils in Southern California by Margaret Oberg	3
Sources of Daffodils	3
Native Bulbs in Oregon by Robin Hansen.	3
President's Message by Cathy Craig...	4
PBS News and Events	5
Seed and Bulb Exchanges Being Organized by Del Sherk	5
Member Meetings and Outings	5
Officers	6
Treasurer's Report	6

Welcome to New Members

Welcome to the founding members of The Pacific Bulb Society. As of June 1, 2002, they are:

Cathy Craig	batlette@cox.net
Marguerite English	meenglis@cts.com
Ken Kehl	ellipsis@concentric.net
Lee Poulsen	wlp@radar-sci.jpl.nasa.gov
Tom Stuart	tstuart@westnet.com
Patricia Bender	pbender@premier1.net
Mark McDonough	antennaria@aol.com
Sue Haffner	sueh@csufresno.edu
Charles Hardman	N/A
Jane McGary	janemcgary@earthlink.net
Elizabeth Peters	Grassyknollexoticplants@yahoo.com
Richard Fee	rsfee@aol.com
Mary Sue Ittner	msittner@mcn.org
Dr. Frances Wenner	franwenn@aol.com
Phyllis Ferguson	PhyllisFer@aol.com
Robin Hansen	hansen.nursery@verizon.net
Barbara Weintraub	blweintraub1@earthlink.net
Ernie O'Byrne	nargsbs@efn.org
John Ingram	jjingram@pacbell.net
Dell Sherk	dells@voicenet.com
Jan Dobak	jddobak@pcez.com

Crocus in the Garden

By David Stephens

David is the holder of one of England's National Crocus Collections. His growing conditions in England involve damp sunless winters and often wet summers. Ed.

Crocus grow mainly in the countries that bound the Mediterranean and its associated seas, the Black Sea and the Caspian. They run in a narrow band of latitude that follows the Mediterranean climate from Portugal, Spain and Morocco in the west to Iran and into its central Asian neighbours in the east. In this range, they are mainly plants that grow at some altitude in mountainous regions. They are summer dormant corms and flower either in autumn or spring, roughly half the species flowering in either season. (Do not confuse autumn flowering *Crocus* with the term 'autumn crocus' which is a colloquialism for *Colchicum* that are not even closely related to the genus *Crocus*.) Some of the easier species will naturalize and form large clumps and drifts that open wide in the autumn or spring sunshine. Quite a number, particularly the spring bloomers are sweetly scented and a large clump on a warm early spring day can be heavenly.

In my role as holder of one of England's National *Crocus* Collections, I recognize about 125 species and subspecies. It is never possible to give a precise number of known taxa, as the botanists change and reorganize the categories. Nature does not produce plants that fall into the neat categories that humans would like. Within these 125 species and subspecies, variability is rife and nature produces a large number of natural varieties and forms. Funnily enough, *Crocus* are not at all promiscuous and there are very few naturally occurring hybrids, the few that do occur are mainly between very closely related plants.

Culture Notes

Place your plants carefully in the garden so larger neighbours do not swamp them. During the summer, they are dormant below ground so be careful not to spear them with the fork or shovel. They will take dryness better than dampness and sun rather than shade. Choice spots in the rockery, in raised beds or sunny small borders under the eaves of the house or sheds suit them fine. Try not to mix up the colours; they look far better if grown in self-groups. Do scatter some general fertilizer on them now and again.

The Bulb Garden

Volume 1 Issue 2

Summer 2002

The autumn flowering species have no leaves at flowering time, whereas the spring plants do have leaves at that time. Buy and plant both autumn and spring flowering sorts when they become available from late summer onwards. Plant in groups about four inches (ten cms.) deep. Experiment by placing under trees and shrubs and in thin grass. However do not mow, the leaves must die naturally in late spring to build up the following year's corms. If they like you and increase, dig them up occasionally and spread them further around. If they produce seed, broadcast it around; it will take three to four years to reach flowering size.

Selected Species for the Garden

In an article in the Alpine Garden Society Bulletin, I stated, "there are a minimum of thirty *Crocus* species that every keen gardener should grow for autumn and spring pleasure". While I stand by my statement, I still had to do a bit of work to produce a list that I could almost guarantee would live happily in the open garden. It's not that there aren't enough taxa that will fall into this category, but whether they are easily available to anyone who reads this and rushes out to buy some.

I eliminated plants from the National *Crocus* Collection list that do not grow well in open ground UK conditions. This is mainly because these few are either semi-desert or high alpine species that just cannot take our dank, damp sunless winters and often wet summers. I excluded others because they are just too small or delicate and would constantly be ruined by the vagaries of British garden life (cats, dogs, kids, slugs, snails, mice, squirrels etc.).

By far the largest factor that would exclude growing them in our gardens is the question of general availability. There is only one idiot in Britain who grows them all and that is me. Quite a lot of them are rare in cultivation (not so in the wild I'm generally pleased to say) and this brings the number down to the 30 with which I originally started this article.

Listed below are the 30 *Crocus* (14 autumn and 16 spring). Given reasonable

well-drained open sunny conditions, these should grow well for you in the garden. All are available with a bit of shopping round, although you will not find many in your local garden centre. You will need to go to specialists, although none of them should break the bank balance.

Autumn

- banaticus* an oddity among *Crocus*, the violet flower bears a resemblance to an Iris and the plant is happy in shaded damp conditions.
- boryi* creamy white flowers from almost yellow buds, sunny and dryish.
- goulimy* easy anywhere, commonly blue, there is a white form which may be a bit more expensive but worth it.
- hadriaticus* white with a dark blotch on the base, sunny and dryish.
- kotschyanus* easy anywhere, lilac to blue with veining.
- laevigatus* easy, small and delightful comes in many varieties of blue and white, scented.
- longiflorus* blue with veining, sunny and dryish, highly scented.
- medius* easy anywhere, blue.
- nudiflorus* early flowering, large purple goblets, easy if it likes you.
- ochroleucus* easy anywhere, small white flowers, multiplies rapidly.
- pulchellus* easy anywhere, white with blue veining.
- serotinus* lilac to blue with darker veins, sunny and dryish.
- speciosus* easy, many varieties available.
- tournefortii* lavender blue, sunny and dryish.
- Spring**
- ancyrensis* small yellow, sunny and dryish
- angustifolius* easy, big bold yellow with bronze stripes *biflorus* hybrids and natural selections from these two species gives a wide range of easy garden plants in whites, blues and yellows with markings.
- chrysanthus* blue, sunny and dryish.
- dalmaticus* blue, sunny and dryish.
- etruscus* the common yellow spring crocus, easy.
- flavus* blue with bold stripes, sunny and dryish.
- imperati* yellows with or without markings, sunny and dryish.
- korolkowii* easy, small, blue.
- kosaninii* white, sunny and dryish.
- malyi* yellow, sunny and dryish.
- olivieri* blues and white, easy in sunny spot.
- sieberi*

The Bulb Garden

Volume 1 Issue 2

Summer 2002

- tommasinianus* ('tommies') easy, naturalizes into large drifts, many colour varieties.
- vernus* the large purple spring *Crocus*, easy, comes in many colour forms.
- versicolor* whites and blues, easy in sunny spot.

I hope that in the future, having grown most of those above, I will have managed to convince you to be in love with *Crocus* and you will wish to try some of the rarer and more difficult ones. That's another story.

Garden Notes

Daffodils in Southern California

by Margaret Oberg

Margaret lives in USDA zone 10, Los Angeles, California; three miles from the Pacific Ocean. She is a member of the American Daffodil Society and grows many lovely daffodils on her property. Ed.

Have you been looking for those old-fashioned daffodils that will grow in your Southern California coastal garden? Look no further! There are many that do love our Mediterranean climate. In general, the *Narcissus* divisions that do best here are Jonquilla, Tazetta, Bulbocodium and Species. Many cultivars from other divisions also do fine, but I personally avoid those with mid late-season and late-season blooming times.

*Editor's Note: The American Daffodil Society (ADS) divides *Narcissus* into thirteen divisions: Trumpets (1), Long-cupped (2), Short-cupped (3), Doubles(4), Triandrus(5), Cyclamineus(6), Jonquilla(7), Tazetta(8), Poeticus(9), Bulbocodium(10), Split-cupped(11), Miscellaneous(12), and Species, Wild Variants and Wild Hybrids(13). For further information, see their web site at <http://www.daffodilusa.org>.*

If you enjoy the smaller flowering choices, consider the following cultivars. 'Erlicheer' (double tazetta) and 'Tripartite' (split cup jonquil) can often be obtained from local nurseries or catalogues such as Van Bourgondien. Two other easily obtained narcissus are 'Golden Showers'

(bulbocodium) and 'Bell Song' (pink-cupped jonquil). Paperwhites will also do well in this area.

Narcissus bulbs should be ordered no later than August first. Catalogues have been sent and usually it is "first come, first served". The nurseries in 'Sources' sell bulbs in the Pacific Region. While bulbs purchased from other areas or countries will grow, they may take a few seasons to adjust or may not be predisposed to the coastal Southern California climate.

Sources of Daffodils

Nancy R. Wilson
6425 Briceland-Thorn Road
Garberville, CA 95542
(Visitors - please call in advance)
Phone/FAX: (707) 923.2407
Email: nwilson@asis.com
<http://www.asis.com/~nwilson/>
Catalog \$1.00
Specializes in species and miniatures

Oregon Trail Daffodils
41905 SE Loudon
Corbett, OR 97019
Phone: (503) 695.5513
FAX: (503) 695.5573
Email: daffodil@europa.com

Cherry Creek Daffodils
21700 SW Chapman Road
Sherwood, OR 97140-8608
Phone: (503) 625.3389
FAX: (503) 625.3399
Email: steve@europa.com
<http://home.europa.com/~stevev/main.html>

Mitsch Daffodils
PO Box 218
Hubbard, OR 97032
Phone: (503) 651.2742
FAX: (503) 651.2792
Email: havensr@web-ster.com
<http://www.web-ster.com/havensr/mitsch>
Catalog \$3.00

Authors Needed: If you always had a yen to write, try it now! Please use Word-97 format, if possible. Font should be Times New Roman 12. Lead articles are 1200 to 4000 words depending on subject and content, and articles for 'Garden Notes' are 200 to 600 words long. Deadlines for the quarterly newsletters are the tenth day of February, May, August and November. Send inquiries or articles to Marguerite.

The Bulb Garden

Volume 1 Issue 2
Summer 2002

Native Bulbs in Oregon

by Robin Hansen

Robin has grown and sold Cyclamen for several years. She is also developing a passion for Brodiaeas. Her garden is in USDA zone 9. She lives in North Bend, Oregon just east of the Pacific Ocean on a property sheltered by dunes and conifers. Her plant list is available if you send an e-mail to her at

hansen.nursery@verizon.net Ed.

To be honest, I've grown a bit bored with species tulips and others, so I've been out hiking along the south coast of Oregon since I moved back from the Willamette Valley, looking for new plants with which to play. One day on a visit to the New River area between Bandon and Port Orford, I stopped for a moment to readjust my daypack, happened to look down, and saw some intense blue starry flowers on very short stems.

I'd never seen them before, but a hunt through various plant books turned up *Brodiaea elegans*. Continuing on, I found *B. hyacinthina*. Both were in open grassy areas, blooming about mid-July. *B. hyacinthina* was about 12" with clusters of white flowers having blue stripes down the middle on the outside of the petals, while *B. elegans* was perhaps 2" with large single flowers. I suppose I'd seen them in regional plant guides, but the delight of seeing a new plant growing in the wild is always exciting.

Then came Jane McGary's bulb list, which introduced me to *Triteleia ixiodes* "Starlight" and *T. ixiodes* var. *anilina*, both of which are blooming now in a shade house. 'Starlight' has been blooming for at least four weeks, and shows no signs of stopping. The golden flowers with purple stripes on their petals are in 3-4" clusters held about 12" above the narrow leaves. Variety *anilina* appears to be half as tall with smaller clusters of paler gold flowers. The purple stripe does not seem as prominent. It is just starting into bloom.

Brodiaeas and *Triteleias* are easy from seed. I place the trays either in the house at about 65 degrees or in a shade

house that is not heated, and get good results with either location. It takes two to three years before first bloom. Of course, these little native bulbs are only the beginning, as I have discovered there are lots of native *Lilies* and more *Brodiaeas* and *Dichelostemmas*, so my treasure hunt has just begun.

President's Message by Cathy Craig

Welcome to the Pacific Bulb Society (PBS). We hope you are enjoying your newsletter. Forming a new organization is a lot of work so there must be a good reason to do it. The people who formed this one felt there was no official group extant that served the needs of those of us who are primarily gardeners, love bulbs, and wish to incorporate bulbs into our gardens.

The main consideration when growing bulbs with other plants is, as you know, referred to as 'companion planting'. When I read any of the numerous articles on companion planting that appear every month in the various gardening magazines I always feel short-changed. Those articles typically give only lip service to the formidable challenge of establishing and maintaining a permanent bulb-garden.

For example; the articles often use terms like 'shallow-rooted perennials'. Now, exactly which perennials might those be? Most of us want a more thorough explanation than can be offered in a once-over-lightly article. This is the reason we formed the Pacific Bulb Society. To explain, in depth, the things that aspiring gardeners, and gardeners with only 'average' experience want to know.

Even though our focus is on gardening in the dirt, don't despair that we won't cover the other topics you joined to find out about. We will also explore and explain, in depth, other bulb growing techniques. One of these is pot culture. Other topics may include cold frames, growing bulbs from seed, bulb books you may add to your bulb reference library, growing shrubs and trees with bulbs, and pest and disease diagnosis and controls.

Please participate in the Seed and Bulb Exchanges. The following article gives a more complete explanation of how it now works. Mark your calendar for our next dinner and slide presentation in October. And, finally, please email us with your questions, comments, or suggestions for future outings. See you all in October!

The Bulb Garden

Volume 1 Issue 2

Summer 2002

PBS News and Events

Seed and Bulb Exchanges Being Organized

by Del Sherk

The PBS Bulb Exchange (BX) is available on-line through our PBS forum. Due to the generosity of our members, I post BX offerings nearly every week. Watch the forum for details. You will see "BX ..." in the subject line of the e-mail notifications.

PBS also has a Seed Exchange (SX). Most plant societies customarily offer their seed list annually. Because our SX is available on-line, I anticipate being able to make SX offerings more frequently than once a year.

Watch for postings of BX offerings on the Forum almost weekly! If you wish to donate bulbs or seed to the PBS SX or BX, please send clean, clearly labeled material to:

**Dell Sherk, PO Box 224, Holicong, PA
18928, USA**

Here is a list of some of the items, which will be included in future, BX postings:

BULBS:

Cyrtanthus hybrids

Hymenocallis narcissiflora

Nerine:

N. manselii

N. fothergillii

N. sarniensis cvs:

'Corallina'

'Dame Alice Godman'

'Gloaming'

'Helen Smith'

'Inchmery Kate'

'Maria'

'Miss Edith Godman'

'Miss France Clark'

'Miss Wilmott'

N. belladonna

N. pudica crosses

N. hybrids:

'Cheerfulness'

'Eddy'

'Suzi'

Ornithogalum saundersiae (Giant Chinchinchee)

Oxalis cvs.

Zephyranthes insularum

Zephyranthes labuffarosa

SEEDS:

Albuca cf. longipes

Albuca navicula

Allium subvillosum

Alstroemeria hookeri

Cyrtanthus hybrids

Chasmanthe aethiopica

Lachenalia isopetala

Lachenalia kliprandensis

Lachenalia pusilla

Leucocoryne pauciflora

Leucojum aestivum

Massonia echinata

Massonia depressa

Massonia heterandra

Massonia sp cf. depressa

Moraea setifolia

Ornithogalum reverchonii

Ornithogalum unifoliatum

Romulea hantamensis

Scilla peruviana

Triteleia clementina

Veltheimia bracteata

Veltheimia bracteata (rare rosealba form)

Veltheimia capensis

Whiteheadia bifolia

Member Meetings and Outings

Dinner and Presentation in April

The first PBS member meeting was held at the home of our president Cathy Craig, in San Clemente, Ca. on April 26th preceding the IBS Bulb Symposium. Several members from IBS joined to get us off to a great start. Paul Chapman visited from England, Bill Dijk from New Zealand and Elizabeth Peters from Washington. Bill brought many delightful bulbs and seeds, and many of us went home enriched by his wares and with depleted wallets!

Mary Sue gave a wonderful presentation and slide show about the bulbs she and her husband saw on their trip to South Africa. They were there after a several-year drought, followed suddenly by major rainstorms dropping more rain than during the previous forty years. Rod and Rachel Saunders from Silverhill Seeds were their hosts, and guided them to see a major flower showing! There were many bulbs which neither Rod nor Rachel had seen blooming for years. At one site, they crossed a stream, which later turned into a major river and were stuck on the far side for a while. Luckily, they were prepared for such an event. Mary Sue is very knowledgeable about the weather and soil conditions in each of the areas they visited.

Dylan Hannon showed slides of his massonias and other bulbs. The massonias are winter growing and cold hardy. The spotting on the leaves develops slowly, and are very beautiful. He showed us how to use a brush to pollinate flowers by

The Bulb Garden

Volume 1 Issue 2
Summer 2002

wiping in on a cheek to get the brush slightly oily, then using it to pick up the pollen. His seeding mix includes pumice, sand and a little organic matter, mulched with pumice. He also brought seeds, many of which are extremely rare. These will be included in the Seed Exchange.

Nursery Outing in July

California members met at Jim Duggan's nursery for a peek into his Bulb growing and shipping section. Read all about this event in the fall newsletter.

Presentation and Bulb Exchange in August

PBS members held a bulb get-together in Portland, Oregon on August 10. They heard a slide lecture and had a bulb exchange. Articles from those who attended will be in the fall newsletter.

Dinner, Presentation and Book signing in October

A Potluck dinner meeting is planned for Saturday, October 5, 2002 at 4:00 p.m. It will be held at the home of the president, Cathy Craig. There will be a hot NEW slide presentation and book signing by Dr. Harold Koopowitz. His recently released book "Clivias" will be available there for purchase. Everyone is welcome, member of PBS or not. If you plan to come, please RSVP to Cathy at 949-369-8588 or by e-mail Batlette@cox.net

ADVERTISE WITH US!

\$20 per issue for a quarter column ad (1/8 page). Request information from Marguerite.

New Perk Available to Members

Cathy Craig and Mary Sue Ittner have set up the PBS E-mail Forum for us. All members who joined before June 1 have already been subscribed. If you have not received a welcome message yet, or are a new member, apply to the list administrator, Mary Sue Ittner, to be included. To send a note to the robin, use

pacificbulbsociety@lists.mcn.org. Great work, Cathy and Mary Sue!

Officers

President: Cathy Craig
(batlette@cox.net)
Vice President: Marguerite English
(meenglis@cts.com)
Treasurer: Lee Poulsen
(wlp@ampersand.Jpl.Nasa.Gov)
List-Serve Administrator: Mary Sue Ittner
(Msittner@mcn.org)
Membership: Lee Poulsen (Acting)
Advertising: Open
SX director: Dell Sherk
(dells@voicenet.com)
Editors:
Newsletter: Marguerite English
Graphics: Ken Kehl
(ellipsis@concentric.net)
Magazine: Cathy Craig
Web Page: Open

Treasurer's Report

Balance: 4/1/02		\$ 0.00
Income:		
Memberships	400.00	
Interest	<u>.11</u>	
Total Income	400.11	
Balance: 6/20/02		\$400.11
Expenses:		
Newsletter Reproduction	44.38	
Fed-Ex	<u>27.86</u>	
Total Expenses	72.24	
Balance 6/20/02		\$327.87

Copyright, 2002
The Bulb Garden

The Bulb Garden is the newsletter of the Pacific Bulb Society (PBS). It is published quarterly and is available to Bulb Society members.

This newsletter will report the news and announcements of the PBS organization. It will also provide news and articles of interest to members.